

*W D Churchill
with Ackland's guide.*

A LETTER

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MEDICAL STUDENT

ON SOME

MORAL DIFFICULTIES IN HIS STUDIES,

AND ON THE

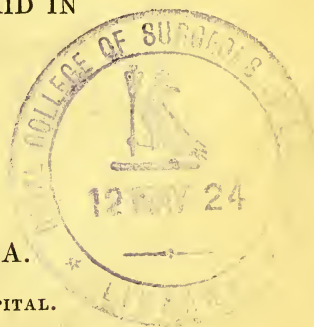
DUTY OF THE STATE TO AID IN

LESSENING THEM.

ADDRESSED TO THE

REV. J. H. NORTH, M.A.

CHAPLAIN TO ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL.



I know it had been more safe and politic to have been silent; but it is, perhaps, more honest and loving to speak; . . . when a man speaketh, he may be corrected by others; but if he holds his peace in good things, he wounds himself. So I have done my part, and leave it to you that which you shall judge to be the best.

LORD BACON'S SPEECHES, vol. vi. p. 22. Bas. Mon. Ed.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following letter is published with a twofold object. First, to show the duty which the country and legislature owe to the youth of the Medical profession. Secondly, to assist some of those who are beginning, like myself, a necessary, but dangerous, study.

I have endeavoured to keep strictly within such topics as it is becoming for a student to discuss; and I have not, therefore, spoken of those older than myself, or treated of measures which now are much agitating my profession. The best service I could do to it and my fellow-students, to my neighbour and myself, appeared to be to *assist* in raising up such a standard of thought among ourselves, as if carried out would make discussion out of place, and reform unnecessary. I do this with a very sincere sense of my own weakness, but I am urged by the belief, that

a few words from an actual student may encourage such as are already interested in our behalf, and interest others.

My motto embodies the feelings with which these pages are put forward; so that I shall stand free from the charge of presumption in the eyes of those whose well being I hope to advance, and whose name and duties I most gladly call my own.

A MEDICAL STUDENT.



A

LETTER,

&c.

REVEREND SIR,

IT is but a few days since I first saw "a letter addressed to Sir Benjamin Brodie, Bart., on the application of the collegiate system to the Medical schools of the metropolis," signed with your name: the office, also, which you hold of Chaplain to St. George's Hospital, being made known in the title page. Looking at the circumstances of the letter in question, written by the Chaplain of a hospital, where the Chaplain is generally *ex officio* chairman of the board of governors; addressed to Sir Benjamin Brodie, a man whose attainments and character are viewed with admiration by the whole of his profession; I cannot but suppose that while you show yourself to have been deeply anxious for the cause you advocate, you also must have ascertained that a

public declaration of your opinion, connected with Sir Benjamin Brodie's name, must be in full accordance with his sentiments. So it is clear that some men, intimately acquainted with the moral and professional branches of Medical education, are anxiously looking for a great change in the administration of them, and that a public notice, appearing under such auspices as those I have stated, is a proof that you at least have hope, nay, expectation of success. In this matter I cannot suppose that we students are likely to be consulted,—few are judges in their own case, and probably we are not the class who would, in this respect, be held more competent than the rest of mankind. Knowing this, I plead, in justification of my addressing you now, that I hope, indirectly, to aid your own cause, by adding some arguments to those already advanced by yourself.

I believe that much can, and ought therefore, to be done, by external aid, to elevate the tone of our body—and this not to the detriment of the high professional standard which is now set before us—but to the further development, as of our moral, so, of necessity, of our practical character. Some persons, indeed, suppose that Medical students are different from other men; and many hard things have been bandied about at our expense. I have heard their necessary occupations in the dissecting room, and their studies in the hospital vilified; the very means, that is, which in patience, in doubt, and in difficulty

they pursue, that they may confer health and its blessings on their neighbours; and, which is prodigious, the charge that usually crowns the rest, is, that they really take pride and pleasure in their pursuits.

But I never yet heard that their difficulties and dangers were to be removed, and never saw a scheme laid down for their improvement¹; so, as one of the body I have only to say, that when the country has provided for us means of moral and religious advancement, and has found us either unworthy or ungrateful, then, and not till then, do I think, will the popular notion of our habits be defensible. Experience has, moreover, shown me, that the world has not been in this matter charitable above her wont. The question ought not to be, whether we are bad men, and want control, for that I doubt not; but whether we are worse than other large bodies of young men. *Considering our disadvantages*, I speak only of what I have seen, I think not.

Considering our disadvantages. What are they? Can they be removed? If so—how?

It is my intention to prove,—1st, That we have

¹ This is not *strictly* true; for the London University and King's College are in existence; but they do not meet the difficulties of the case to any adequate extent; though the latter *may* do so hereafter: and I am not unmindful of the attempt made at Guy's Hospital; but that has not brought forth fruit. There is reason to believe, however, that the highest ecclesiastical authorities are neither ignorant of our wants, nor unwilling to assist us.

difficulties to labour under, and trials to encounter, such as no other young men have :—and 2ndly, That under another system (in the forming which the country as such, seems bound to help us,) these evils may be much lessened. But as to the third question, or the particular means to be taken to this end, I shall, as in duty bound, for the most part leave it to the consideration of older and wiser men. In all that follows, I shall make no allusion to those above me in my profession : your letter related only to such as were yet under direct instruction, in technical language, “*pupils*,” so also does mine ; therefore, I trust that my remarks, relating as they do wholly to ourselves, may not be construed by my superiors to bear any other meaning. Lest, however, it be thought that this is a purely professional subject, let it not be forgotten, that in proportion as our fellow-men help us, in the same will it be repaid them, at the hour of need, and that to provide for the training up wise and pious physicians, (I use the term generically,) is fit care for the greatest patriot and statesman.

First, then, As to our disadvantages.—A great part of these you have in your letter clearly explained ; and although you do not profess to state the whole (nor indeed do I), and especially forbear from enlarging on the fact, that great numbers of students have not received an education sufficiently extended, ere their professional studies commenced, yet even on this point I will quote your own words,

as more worthy of credit than mine. "Take, for example, the case of one who has been removed from school at the age of fourteen or fifteen, for the purpose of being apprenticed to a practitioner in the country; and this is, I believe, a very general course. What superintendence has been exercised here? What pains can have been bestowed upon the moral culture, or the formation of the principles and habits of a youth thus situated, by a master whose unavoidable absence from home extends frequently to the whole of the day, and whose intercourse with his apprentice is thus necessarily confined within the limits of mere professional commands on the one side, and obedience on the other? Yet, with no other preparation than this, it is that perhaps the majority of students are sent to encounter the difficulties and temptations of a London life:" and when such an one has arrived here to attend the masterly professional instruction, delivered for the most part by men of high character and attainment, showered also in this age and place round our very doors, whither does he come. He arrives, and finds "there is no officer connected with the hospital at which the pupil is entered, whose province it is to guide him in the selection of his apartments; there are no limits within which his choice is confined; there is no warrant for the respectability of the persons at whose house he may take up his abode; there is no provision made for the regularity of his meals, nor for

any of those arrangements upon which his comfort depends. He has to settle and arrange for himself all those household affairs, which present no slight difficulty to those who are far older and more experienced than himself. He is alone ; and solitude in London is of all things the most desolate. In these circumstances he applies for guidance to those who, not unfrequently, are least able to render him effectual aid ; he is at least as likely to fall into bad hands as into good : it may be, a notice stuck up in the hall of the hospital catches his eye, and he takes refuge from his perplexity in the first lodging-house that presents itself ; and in this situation, unfriendly to his moral character, unfavourable to study, not admitting any superintendence, and destitute of all domestic comfort, he passes the first months, perhaps, which in the whole of his life have not been spent in the society of his family or friends."

Thus freely have I recalled to your recollection your own words—as freely will I show you some phases of the *moral* life, to which the student is now first introduced, leaving you to infer how sad the picture is, and how easily a brighter light might be made to gleam across it.

He enters a large hospital, with no adequate notion of medical study or its nature—no idea which had painted for him its wearisome details (if so he please to judge them), its many drawbacks, its horrors, its sad accompaniments of physical and mental sorrow. He had not thought upon the number of the sick

and dying with whom he was to take up his abode -- he had not been fully prepared for familiar contact with the dead, nor learned as yet to view his fellow-men as machines without souls. Hitherto, it may be, he knew, of disease only that it was from God, that it was a remedy applied to the body to cure the disorders of a sinning soul ; a mark of chastisement ; an act of love from the hand of a wise Father. As yet he had but thought death the flight of an immortal creature to some immortal abode, the passing of a lost being before the tribunal of an offended God, or the embosoment of a saint in the arms of his Saviour.

A corpse, may be, he had never *seen*, or if he had, it was that of a parent, or a brother, or a friend, over which in his tender spirit he had wept and prayed ; on both, on disease and on death, he had looked as the result of sin, the fruit of the fall of Adam, the perpetual remembrance of his forefather's guilt, and his own wickedness. How could he do otherwise ? as a boy he had shrunk instinctively from the contemplation of them ; as a youth he had dreaded their approach ; as both he had felt death itself a moral rather than a physical change.

It is now so with him no more ; henceforth there is no mystery, no awe ; he is guided to the dissecting room, and mystery is dragged out into fact, and awe banished, and the dead revealed in a guise that at first sight might pall the man that would mount a breach.

His affections, it may be, are yet untainted, and

he is shocked to watch the indifference visible on every side. The jest, the laugh, the game fall heavily on his unaccustomed ear, and he wonders, perhaps fears; or, which is worse, he goes prepared to brave it; he enters determined to show himself careless at the scene—there is small effort needed to part with innocence—he succeeds, and all his days remains unmoved.

It is to this that I desire to call your most earnest attention; because to such a shock all the hardness of character which we are said to possess, may (if we have it) be *primarily* attributed. In any institution founded for moral control, each season should be begun with most explicit caution on this head; views of death, and statements of the true grounds of reverence for the dead should be laid before the novice, such as would tend to keep his affections alive, his sympathies both gentle and pure. It is a disadvantage that no other class of youth labours under, the being deprived of that natural instinct which leads men to think of their own death when they hear of that of others, to be habitually called to a sense of religion (undefined it is true,) by the sound of the tolling bell. To us the mention of the dead calls up far other ideas.

When it is proposed that adequate notions of death, and the eternal truth of all that relates to our natural reverence for a lifeless corpse be drawn forth and taught, do not dismiss me, supposing that I desire to wind the matter too high for common use. Some

men, I am well aware, deem the occupation of the medical student as unlawful. This I cannot grant, nor while a medical student is it possible that I ever should. With real consideration for those who support this view, which I think most unpractical, and if it were likely to spread, most mischievous, I would remind them that it is scarce reasonable to suppose that the lives and happiness of the living, dependant on anatomical study, are not of *more* value than the bodies of the dead ; and would ask, whether there is any thing contrary to reason and true religion in searching for charity's sake, that which the ordinance of God has permitted to be prey to worms. Some on the other hand, speak of all reverence as absurd : when these persons *act* on their view, they put themselves (theoretically) out of the pale of civilization.

Things being so, it is of the utmost importance to us students to consider attentively with what feelings all the rest of mankind do now regard, and ever have regarded the presence of the dead, and the more while we are yet unhardened to the sight of them. For other men are not cold and reckless in the presence of a corpse : they cannot laugh and talk as if they were at their own table, but are struck with some solemn reverence, or, at least, with something of religious awe. And, from whatever cause this arises, it is a fact which has obtained from the creation to the present hour, with every one who has not entered on anatomical study. So in former days it was with the

medical student, before dissection became as easy, as happily for mankind, it now is. "Instead," writes Sir Francis Palgrave¹, "of being attended merely by a crowd of unthinking youth, even old grey-headed men came eagerly to learn. All presented themselves prepared as for an important event. They encountered the task with minds pre-determined by religious reverence. Thus were they preserved, well was it for them that they should be so, from the assumed defiance of death, the irreverent treatment of the pale corpse, the ribald jest, the impure gibe, hardened jeer, all no less baneful to the individual, than to the dignity of the noble science imparted for the relief of suffering mortality."

Natural must this awe and reverence for the most part be, because it has prevailed in all ages and countries soever, being dependant jointly on instinct and reason, and probably, in early ages at least, on traditionary revelation. How necessary it is, Abraham Tucker, a man by no means squeamish overmuch in these matters, tells, when speaking of burial he writes, "Nor is such an idle ceremony, because the omission of it might introduce *a savageness, and obduracy of temper* that would be dangerous to the living." In truth, so strong is this feeling, that if we lose all respect for the dead, we do put ourselves out of communion with the rest of mankind, and take up a position which they look upon with horror and sus-

¹ Merchant and Friar, page 354.

picion ; many of our sympathies with them are cut off, and our influence impaired ; yet how necessary such influence and such sympathies are for our own well-being, and the use we may be of to our fellow-creatures, is at once admitted by all.

But arguments for preserving a temper such as is here shown to be all but universal, are not few : yet with a Christian they are unnecessary. He has no room for half feeling ; he can neither doubt, nor waver : he can say only of one that would needlessly injure a Christian corpse, or heedlessly trifle with it, " Let him pay the cost, he, perchance, has counted it." Any one who founds his consideration of the question on Revelation would be forced to the conclusion that the sanctity of the body in life and in death is equal. Numerous passages in the Epistles¹ crowd on your memory to prove this, and they are of so marvellous and holy import that I forbear entering upon them. It seems needful, however, to hint, that there is a depth below the surface which had better not here be gone into ; so that the attention of the ordinary observer may be drawn only to the part of the evidence most clear, and most valuable to those whose duty compels them, for the sake of the living, to investigate the dead. I allude to the eleventh article of the Creed, " the resurrection of the body ;" the dead are to rise again ; how, and in what manner, is known to God alone, nor is it to the purpose

¹ e. g. 1 Cor. vi. 19.

that we should inquire : suffice it that the Christian believes it shall surely so be, and thence his reverence towards the dead is multiplied tenfold.

Men have in this, as in other matters, dogmatized so much to the injury of the plain fact, which no reasoning can explain or do away, that it appeared unwise, for this and other reasons also, to enter the question theologically. God in mercy grant that we students hold this part of our faith in integrity, and divest our minds of the horrid scenes our bodily eye does witness, reposing simply on the whole tenor of that chapter of the Epistle to the Corinthians, which we have heard with tears at the grave, rejoicing that the body shall be changed from the corruption we now view, to incorruption ; from the dishonour we now feel, to glory ; from the natural to the spiritual ; from the earthly to the heavenly. So has many a young man inwardly felt and prayed, when at the beginning of his studies he first saw a vacant bed which with more than ordinary interest he had daily visited, and then as he walked silently on, has wondered that a soul should have been one moment sorrowing here, and the next, having left our company, have reached those abodes where all men wait for the day of judgment. But after repeated instances of the like kind these thoughts die away, and being wrapped up in care for the bodies alone, we seem to regard the bodies as if they were the souls also, as if the whole of men.

Thus much in Truth : if I have erred it has been in

not stating enough. For the sake of that Truth, for the sake of God who made it, let us learn for ourselves, and let those, who can, help us by institutions, by guidance direct or indirect, to live as holders of that same Truth, to quit ourselves as men, not idling, trifling, jesting, in our fearful studies, but knowing that they are great, necessary, and holy, so tune our hearts that they be fit for entering them.

You who well know the nature of the ordeal which we undergo, will not think I have overrated either the dangers, or the need of a remedy; nor will you perceive any thing in the former pages decrying the ardent pursuit of knowledge in a philosophic temper, or of beneficent studies in a pious and tender spirit; but rather you will find this, that with energy and manly bearing we should cheerfully ply our happy task as becomes a Christian gentleman¹.

But our troubles do not cease here: after all that has been said there are other dangers which surround us; fearful indeed, and deep seated. I entertain no doubt that there is a tendency to Pantheism and to Materialism which pervades all our studies, arising, it is true, from the incomprehensiveness of the human intellect, and the languor of religious principle; men cannot, however, be all philosophers or theologians, so for these things it is better to pass them by; while the mention of them will the more

¹ See the whole of the first letter addressed to Sir Robert H. Inglis, by Mr. Green, but especially page 17. *Touchstone of Medical Reform*, by J. H. Green. Highley, 1841.

impress all with the great importance of some purely moral and religious guidance in the prosecution of our studies. I do not say that this of necessity must be public, unquestionably not; for we may provide it in our chambers for ourselves; but how many will? and how many do not know the need of it? how few know what to seek? Evil finds us out, but good we must hunt after.

How then is it to be taught? in what lecture will such instruction be conveyed? How shall the young student be told what weapons are the fittest for him to use in this strange conflict of our's, or having them, how shall he learn to wield them? As our body is now constituted in the metropolis I do not think it possible; it is true that the chaplain might, as was attempted at Guy's Hospital, add to the great labour of his office a lecture on moral philosophy, such a lecture being of a practical and religious, rather than of a speculative character. It is true, that he might open the chapel of his hospital, and offer the blessing of daily worship, whose value none know who have not tried; but without the official co-operation of the governing body this charitable deed of his were of no avail¹.

To you I am ashamed to name the good that

¹ At the hospital I frequent, it were impossible to open the chapel at an hour when the students could in their first two years attend, at least not as things now are, and it may be fairly questioned whether it were advisable apart from a college, or some similar institution.

would come from this part alone of the college system. The associations with the hospital would be hallowed,—as our occupations also. Charity in its highest sense would appear to have her reign there, as in part she has. Hospitals exist not for us, but for the poor. Our visits to the wards would be a work of love, as far as is consistent with our primary intent of self-instruction, our studies would be stamped with the character which our profession bears—with good to our fellow-men, and glory to God. We should learn the value of prayer in aiding our exertions : before the employments of the dead-house, the dissecting room, or the wards, we should in heart pray that God's Fatherly hand might be with us in these our fearful studies, that his Holy Spirit might be in us, guiding our minds, subduing our passions, purifying our souls. We should beg that Christ would send us his meekness and gentleness, that He would keep our eyes and thoughts from wandering ; and since our studies are so painful, and at times so irksome, that we might not fail in holy desires, in patience, perseverance, and zeal in well doing ; so that by such means, while raising the estimate of our responsibilities ¹ we should for-ourselves apply with more depth and earnestness ; and for the rest, we should treat them more and more as fellow-sufferers with ourselves.

¹ See a Sermon on the Responsibilities of Medical Students. The Rev. F. Maurice. Darton and Clark, 1838.

Connecting our studies with our eternal interests, we might hope, according to our respective talents, to raise up characters fit for men daily conversant with laws that govern the universe, from the properties of atoms to the ultimate principles of life—characters of men who know the laws of life, and knowing, guide them ; that is, when God wills—not when they.

That this is the common bent which our minds take you cannot imagine, that there is any reason why it should not be, you cannot believe ; and that the blame rests wholly on us, you will not be unreasonable enough to declare—If there be here sin, that sin is partly national. Why have the youth of a profession, second only to one in blessedness, never received, till these few years, one act of gratitude ? Why have men been pleased to say we were ever drowning, and have never thrown so much as a straw to save us ?

It may be urged that some of the sentiments expressed by me, are those only of a youth, and that when his mind is more accustomed to scenes of distress, and more skilled in the deeper Truths which light the soul of an aged man, he will drop a tender softness unbecoming to active life. If so I will refer you to the beautiful words of that good physician, Sir Thomas Browne, whose Confession should be in the hands of every man. “I never hear the toll of a passing bell, though in my mirth, without my prayers

and best wishes for the departing spirit. I cannot go to cure the body of my patient, but I forget my profession, and call unto God for his soul¹." Or for a solemn view of death by one who knew full well to watch it. "You may see a dead corpse lying, for a little while, in the very next bed. Oh lay it to heart! Look upon that awful sight, and think what has become of the soul which lately dwelt in that forsaken clay. What a great change has it already proved. An hour or two ago it was with you and its fellow-patients, but now it is with angels or with devils; triumphing in the presence of Christ, or bemoaning itself in chains of darkness²."

I have endeavoured to point out to you some disadvantages under which we labour, and some truths, the consideration of which would aid to remove them. Those truths, connected for the most part with revelation, must be *taught*—nor will they be acquired in any other way.

I have carefully abstained from all exaggerations, or bringing before you any scenes, or relating any circumstances which might unduly awaken your sympathy. I shall allude only to one more commonly reputed evil, the effects of the operating theatre on beginners—as *we students choose to treat it*, it is mischievous, doubtless: we are not as mindful of the feelings of the thankful sufferer as of our-

¹ Religio Medici. 1659. Page 146.

² Sir James Stonhouse, physician to the Northampton Infirmary.

selves. Selfishness ever recoils inwards. But I scorn the notion that these scenes are hardening when duly used; and I stamp him ignorant of the laws of humanity who maintains the thought. Humanity is love displayed in action. The good surgeon absorbed in care for a sufferer, since he can relieve the most, is by that fact of all men the most gentle.

At the outset, I engaged not to enter fully into the practical application of your system; but one remark I feel bound to make, lest evil arise from it.—To stand firm in virtue we must stand unsupported by man; some trial is necessary for the acquisition of moral strength. If compulsory rectitude be attempted, the scheme fails; for then the mischief of the youth will run into the guilt of the man.

I am led to venture this remark, because you draw some parallel between the discipline of the Universities and our own. The Universities, however, do not so much aim at communicating facts, as at inculcating principles, and teaching how to learn; and herein consists their extraordinary value: therefore, moral training and discipline are a vital part of their constitution. Whereas, with the Hospital student, he comes to learn professional knowledge, which, barring the fatality and misery which hovers over the bad man, the bad may learn as well as the good¹.

¹ This must not be understood as an opinion respecting retributive justice in this life; it expresses this only, that professional

It would be unwise to adopt any plan which would savour of restraint or of compulsion. It were well rather to make the admission to the College a favour, and existence in it dependant solely on good conduct; to have over it a Principal who should govern with parental guidance, not tutorial law. During the first three months' residence, till the student had an understanding of the nature of his responsibilities, penalties might be allowed, and then should be wholly inadmissible; for I cannot conceive that to be closely watched becomes the character of one about to practise a profession, and I do not think that any of the better men would place themselves under it. They should live (since you have drawn the parallel,) as fellows of a well ordered College,

knowledge does not depend on moral or religious qualification. The use that knowledge may be turned to, doubtless does, for it would be impossible to discover or show all the cases when a good man would have such influence over his patient as to produce a favourable termination of disease, when another would fail: and though such a question is obviously not to be treated fairly, by a young student, yet such an one may call attention to this remarkable passage:—

“ Give place to the Physician, for the Lord hath created him : let him not go from thee, for thou hast need of him. *There is a time when in their hands is success, for they shall also pray unto the Lord,* that He would prosper that which they give for care and remedy to prolong life.”—Ecclesiasticus xxxviii. 2. 14.

Be it ever thankfully remembered by us, that one of the Evangelists was a Physician, and that the most relief that was ever afforded to a suffering body, was given by our Saviour Christ himself.

under an all-powerful head, rather than as undergraduates under a wakeful tutor. You, doubtless, are aware, that two years since the following notice emanated authoritatively from Guy's Hospital, and, as such, forms a most valuable nucleus in all future considerations of the subject, because the management of that noble institution must be held inferior to none in the kingdom.

“Heads of a scheme for the improvement of Medical Education in the Metropolis.”

“Defects and abuses in the present system of Medical Education, have of late years been industriously pointed out, and severely commented on. It has been remarked, especially, that no attempt has been made to provide for medical students in London similar advantages to those possessed by young men at the Universities. It is said, that those to whom the most important duties will hereafter be committed, are sent (sometimes at a very early age, and by parents who can with difficulty afford them the necessary funds,) into the midst of the metropolis, and that no precautions are taken to preserve them from the idle, extravagant, and immoral courses to which it offers such facilities.

“The authorities of Guy's Hospital consider that they may, to a certain degree, assist in remedying an evil so justly and universally deplored. A large Medical School is attached to the Institution, which

they superintend, and has contributed greatly to its reputation and usefulness. They are desirous that medical students should have the opportunity of placing themselves in an establishment resembling in its arrangement and discipline, the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge.

“For this purpose it is requisite, that a building should be provided, containing rooms for not less than students, with a dining-hall, buttery, and kitchen, and possibly also a medical library. A convenient site for such a building can be obtained in the immediate vicinity of the Hospital.

“The sum necessary for the building, &c., cannot be advanced from the funds of the charity till it be positively ascertained that the rents derived from the students’ chambers will produce a sufficient interest and security for such an investment of capital. It is, therefore, in contemplation to raise a sum by way of loan, in shares of not less than each. As the object is simply to remedy the evils which have been alluded to, and to limit the expenses of a hospital education, and not to obtain a lucrative investment of capital, no greater interest than can be paid for the sums so advanced, and the authorities of the hospital reserve to themselves the right of paying off the principal sums, whenever they may consider it desirable so to do.

“It is calculated that furnished rooms, differing in the nature of the accommodation, can be afforded at a charge varying from 10s. to 20s. weekly. The

number of hospital pupils so far exceeds any accommodation which can thus be supplied, that no difficulty is anticipated in the selection of occupants.

“It is proposed that the whole arrangement of the internal economy shall be under the exclusive controul of the authorities of the hospital, and that the establishment be governed by such rules and regulations as they may deem expedient.

“Without certain restraints the establishment would not meet the wishes of the parents and guardians of the students, and of those interested in the improvement of Medical education. The pupils, it is believed, will readily acquiesce in them, as the means of procuring an increase of comfort, convenience, and respectability.

“The promoters of this design have no doubt of its entire success for the object proposed; still they think it right to observe that a building so situated will always be a valuable property, and might at any time be converted to other purposes far more lucrative than that to which they would now devote it. Their wish being to provide the best practical education, upon the most economical plan, they submit the present statement to the consideration of those who feel an interest in the subject.”

To this I have only to add an expression of hope that the legislature may be induced seriously to consider the question in the ensuing session of parliament, and that, then and there, it will be discussed, not as a professional, but as a national question. I

hope that it will be clearly elicited how much benefit would accrue to the country, and how much happiness to us, should means be resolved upon which might tend to raise up in us a more philosophic spirit of inquiry, and a higher sense of moral and religious responsibility. This will not be gained by making more complicated the professional examination for our diploma, but by raising the idea of our noble profession, and setting before the youngest of us more broad and general views of life than fear of the "college" and "hall" inspires. That this will be done by any means other than moral training cannot be believed.

In diffidence I offer the following rude scheme for consideration. I believe there are not above five hospitals which could accept it; the sum required, therefore, not being very great. And I have thought it well to add it to that given above, because it is more general, and does not enter into the question of how the hospital should raise its own funds—that would be immaterial to the Government; or, should they have terms to make on this head, they would themselves offer them.

I.—That every Metropolitan Hospital, having a Medical School attached, transmit to Government a printed form, which shall contain as follows:

- a.* The number of its students.
- b.* The number of entries in each year, stating

how many have entered for one year or under, and how many as perpetual pupils, making no distinction between the physicians' and surgeons' pupils.

c. To state how many have received education at either of the two Universities.

d. 1. Whether it desires a College attached.

2. How many it would propose to accommodate in such College.

e. What sum it would raise, and what the estimated or probable cost of the College.

f. Under what government it would propose to place such College.

II.—The government, when these data were obtained, might be willing to lay down its own details, offering to every Hospital desiring such aid,

a. That the sum of £ be given to the building fund, on condition that accommodation be provided for twice the number of the average annual entries, taking the average of the last ten years.

b. £ be given to every such College in support of a Principal, to be a Clergyman of the Church of England, in full orders, (to be appointed conjointly by the Vice-Chancellor of his own University and the President of the College of Physicians; to be under the authority of the Bishop of London, but liable to removal by the board of

Governors or other ordinary “governing” power) of the Hospital.

- c. Such annual payment to the Principal to be guaranteed for ten years, and after that continued or withdrawn contingently.

Notwithstanding that the last few lines may appear far removed from my province, yet the bounds originally set by me have not been passed, for I have only treated of such things as concern the younger students like myself. To them, perhaps, some apology might be offered, but in any thing that has been said *they* can blame me only for misguided zeal, a charge which I shall not seek to refute, while *you* can but differ with the manner in which my task has been executed. Some few may still be found who will think that a weak mind alone would trouble itself with points nice as those I have discussed ; or that high views of piety will interfere with professional attainments—but, for the first, I can assure them that the noblest nations have, of all men, shown the most respect for the dead, save only under peculiar circumstances ; and, for the second notion, a little further observation on their part will correct it.

I have had neither ability nor time to arrange my subject in a form worthy of your attention,—the nature of our studies admits, as you know, no room for any other employments, so that if I had not had some necessary leisure, and hoped that a few words

from one of my body might cheer and assist you, I had rather have followed my own pursuits without interruption. Some of the difficulties which press on the path of those in whom you have interested yourself, have with earnestness and candour been pointed out, and some suitable remedies been hinted at, so that I leave the matter before those whom it may interest or concern. I have great expectations that our country will aid a body of men whose lives are to be spent in doing her good; and I hope that expectation may, in my day, be realized.

We cannot but mourn over the discussions among our betters which, though they are not for students to consider, yet we are compelled to hear a rumour of, and heartily desire to see quieted. It certainly appears as if perfection is occasionally sought, whereas except in a wandering imagination, it does not exist, and that requirements are made of our marvellous times, which no age can possibly fulfil; for neither will mystery nor authority, on the one hand, be maintained with as much ease in a day of refinement and science, as in the times of superstition and ignorance—nor, on the other, will it ever happen that the many are as great as the few.

It is my earnest hope that no imprudence of mine will have caused you any sorrow, for there is much ground for delicacy in addressing one in your sacred office thus anonymously. May I ask, in conclusion, that, if the author of this letter should be made

known to you, on viewing his personal delinquencies, you will have the charity to charge him with weakness, but not with insincerity.

I am,

REVEREND SIR,

Most respectfully Yours,

A MEDICAL STUDENT.

London, Nov. 19, 1841.

THE END.

